

NATO CIVIL EMERGENCY PLANNING IN A NEW SECURITY ENVIRONMENT: MOI-DG FRS CZ POINT OF VIEW

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Abstract

With the shifts in the security environment in Europe respective activities within the framework of NATO Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) go 'hand in hand'. NATO CEP continues to adapt to changes in severity and specific nature of threats. The importance of civil preparedness and resilience of NATO as a whole and of its members is on the rise. This article describes NATO CEP framework vis-à-vis national CEP system coordinated by Ministry of the Interior – Directorate General of the Fire and Rescue Service of the Czech Republic (MoI-DG FRS CZ) and presents recent developments in the CEP area between NATO summits in Wales (2014) and Warsaw (2016).

Key words

Civil Emergency Planning, NATO, security environment, hybrid threats, civil preparedness, resilience, ballistic missile defence, Wales Summit, Warsaw Summit, NATO defence planning process.

1 Introduction

After the Russian annexation of Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea in March 2014 NATO has rediscovered the importance of its original *raison d'être* – territorial defence. In this respect the Wales summit in September 2014 was a key milestone that marked the refocusing of the Alliance's activities in political, civilian and military realm. This reflection of the shifts in the security environment has also translated in the NATO Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) framework that plays a vital role in supporting and enabling NATO collective defence and crisis management operations.

This article will outline the purpose of the NATO CEP in general, describe its links to the Czech Republic and explain the role played by the MoI-DG FRS CZ in particular. We will also summarize the developments within the NATO CEP between the last two NATO summits in Wales (2014) and in Warsaw (2016) focusing on current activities of the MoI-DG FRS CZ.

2 Civil Emergency Planning at NATO

The general purpose of the NATO CEP is, on the strategic level, coordination of national planning activities of the NATO member and partner countries with the aim to achieve, as effectively as possible, utilization of national civil resources in support of NATO's strategic objectives (as outlined in NATO Strategic Concept).[1] This contribution of the CEP framework to the NATO's three core tasks (Collective Defence, Crisis Management and Cooperative Security) is further specified in the 'Political Guidance for Civil Emergency Planning' that is updated every four years (currently 2014-2017). [2]

2.1 Historical developments in the NATO CEP area

The NATO Civil Emergency Planning has its origins in the 1950's when newly founded NATO started to transform from a mere defence treaty to a more structured defence organization with elaborated systems and procedures enabling it to conduct concerted defence planning among NATO members in order to deter the Soviet threat. Part of this defence planning during the Cold War was conducted within the civil defence area and also included civil assets (railways, ports, etc.) and capabilities required for successful defence effort of the Alliance while providing protection to civilian populations of NATO members.

In response to catastrophic North Sea Floods of 1953 that struck NATO allies along the North Sea was this 'war centred approach' revamped. The North Atlantic Council (NAC) subsequently endorsed the 'Policy on Cooperation for Disaster Assistance in Peacetime' and by 1958 the Alliance had established procedures for coordination of assistance between member countries in case of disasters. [3] Since then NATO policy was revised three times. First in 1971, then in 1993 and most recently in May 1998 following a proposal by the Russian Federation to enhance practical cooperation in the field of International Disaster Relief. The NATO policy was reviewed and a completely new one was introduced together with the creation of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). Since then the EADRCC serves as NATO's principal civil crisis response mechanism for responding to civil emergency situations in the Euro-Atlantic area and as a clearing-house mechanism for the coordination of requests and offers of assistance that covers NATO member and partner countries, including the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICO) and Partners Across the Globe (PaG). [4]

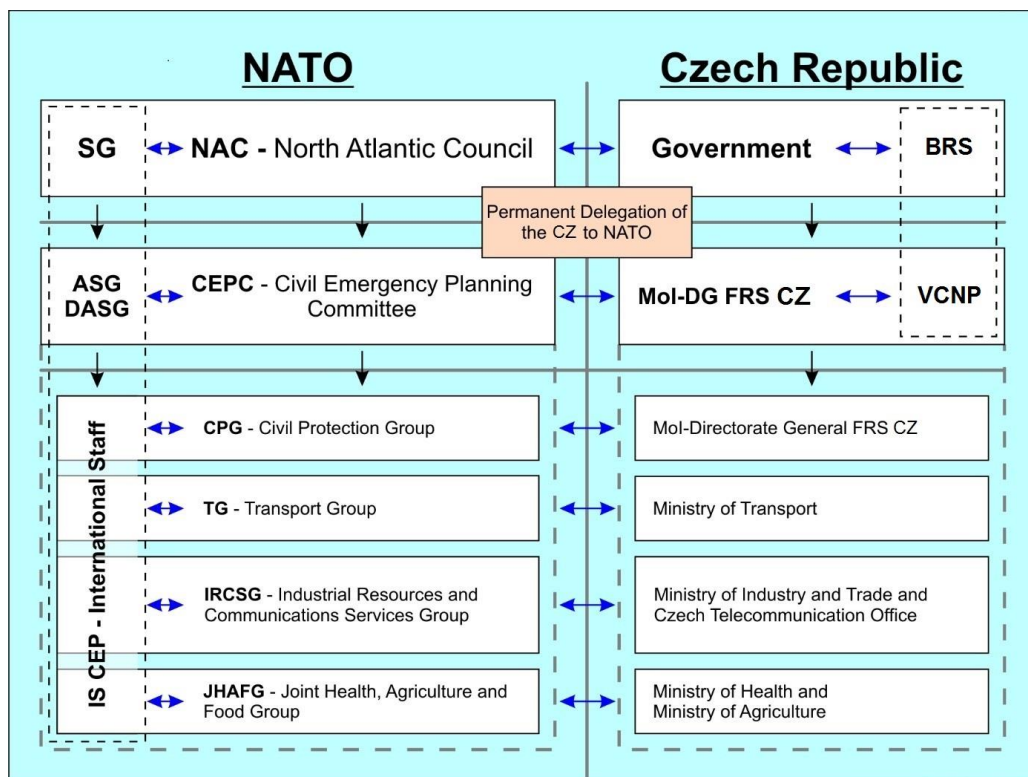
2.2 NATO CEP and national CEP system of the Czech Republic (CZ)

The top NATO advisory body responsible for overall coordination of the CEP area is the Civil Emergency Planning Committee (CEPC) that reports directly to the NAC, the principal political decision-making NATO body. CEPC then coordinates the work of four specialized planning groups which bring together relevant national authorities, industry experts and military representatives. These four planning groups are: Civil Protection Group (CPG) – CZ represented by the MoI-DG FRS CZ; Transport Group (TG) – CZ represented by the Ministry of Transport; Industrial Resources and Communication Services Group (IRCSG) – CZ represented by the Ministry of Industry and Trade together with the Czech Telecommunication Office; and Joint Health Agriculture and Food Group (JHAFG) – CZ represented by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture.

The CEP framework is also supported by NATO International Staff (IS) that is headed by the NATO Secretary General (SG) and, in the CEP area, managed by the Assistant Secretary General for Operations (ASG) and his Deputy Assistant Secretary General (DASG). In the CEP area the NATO IS also serves as a support and enabling element for CEPC with regard to NATO crisis management. Chart 1 depicts simplified organisational structure of the NATO CEP framework and corresponding national authorities.

The NATO CEP framework is also complemented by a formalized pool of civil experts that is maintained by the four planning groups under CEPC. Among other roles these civil experts can be used to form Rapid Reaction Team (RRT) or Advisory Support Team (AST) that can be sent to assist and support NATO member or partner countries – AST in the area of preparedness and RRT in case of a crisis or emergency. [5]

Chart 1
NATO CEP and national CEP system



Source: MoI-DG FRS CZ

In the Czech Republic the overall “umbrella” institution for the national CEP system is the National Security Council (BRS) that also acts as the main forum for governmental coordination in the national security area. Within the structure of the NSC is established the national Civil Emergency Planning Committee (VCNP) – a standing working body of the NSC responsible for the area of civil emergency planning and for coordination and planning of measures in internal security area. National CEPC is the cornerstone of the national framework that ensures the overall coordination between individual ministries and governmental bodies, evaluates documents and discusses and coordinates work at NATO and EU level. MoI-DG FRS CZ also works as a national CEPC secretariat.

The broad scope of the CEP also requires systematic and thorough working cooperation among all relevant national authorities. In the Czech Republic this coordination is managed by the MoI-DG FRS CZ which organises regular and ad-hoc coordination meetings bringing together relevant national actors taking part in the specialised planning groups under the NATO CEPC.

Objectives of these coordination meetings are, first, to deal with NATO CEP issues at national level and, second, to discuss in details the agenda for the coming CEPC plenary meetings in detail and instruct the Czech delegation that takes part in it. CEPC plenary meetings are attended by directors or deputy directors general responsible for civil protection and civil

emergency planning. Participants of coordination meetings also consult and exchange views on the agenda and other relevant activities from the planning groups or other ad-hoc working groups under the CEPC (more in chapter 3.3).

The last two coordination meetings were organized by the MoI-DG FRS CZ in October and December 2016. The focus of the first meeting was to inform the participants about the conclusions of the NATO Warsaw summit and to review/survey the details with regard to the national implementation (more in chapter 3.). This time the usual participants from relevant national bodies taking part in the specialised planning groups under the CEPC were joined by representatives from the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic. The second meeting organized in December focused on the upcoming CEPC plenary meeting which took place on 14 and 15 December 2016 in Brussels.

2.3 NATO CEP and FRS CZ

The NATO CEP was incorporated into the Fire and Rescue Service of the Czech Republic's (FRS CZ) area of competence together with the civil protection agenda in 2001 when, following the catastrophic 1997 Central European flood, an overall overhaul of the Czech security system was carried out.[6] Since then FRS CZ incorporates not only traditional fire units and fire protection administration (fire safety rules), but on behalf of the MoI also fulfils tasks in the CEP area, crisis management, population protection and integrated rescue system cooperation (coordinates first responders/blue light services and other relevant subjects).

Since 2001, the MoI-DG FRS CZ also has a liaison officer for the CEP at the Permanent Delegation of the Czech Republic to NATO in Brussels. This officer is responsible for coordination and communication between the MoI-DG FRS CZ and NATO CEP institutions and since 2004, when the Czech Republic entered the EU, he also became the liaison officer for the EU civil protection.

3 NATO CEP between the summits in Wales (2014) and Warsaw (2016)

The return of military force as an instrument for furthering foreign and security policy goals (interstate war), terrorism, asymmetrical conflicts, rise of non-state actors, hybrid warfare, CBRN and cyber security or preparedness to minimise the consequences of a missile attack – all of these phenomena or threats highlight the growing importance of national resilience and civil preparedness in providing vital parts of national security.

A year after the Wales summit, in the summer of 2015, the NAC tasked the CEPC to provide an analysis of possible gaps in the civil preparedness area. The CEPC then produced a 'Report on the state of civil preparedness' (hereinafter "Report") [7] which was approved by the NATO ministers of defence in February 2016. One of the tasks that arose from this endeavour was to prepare 'Resilience guidelines for the seven baseline requirements' (hereinafter "Guidelines"). [8] The main aim of these Guidelines is to enhance resilience of the NATO member countries and in effect the whole Alliance.

Part of these Guidelines – the Compendium of initial evaluation criteria – was finalized by CEPC in June 2016, approved by the NATO ministers of defence and noted at the NATO Warsaw summit that took place on 8 - 9 July 2016. The growing importance of civil preparedness was demonstrated by the fact that for the first time this area was explicitly mentioned in the final summit communiqué issued by the NATO members' heads of state and government. [9] Moreover, a declaration affirming the commitment to continue to enhance the Alliance's resilience and further improve civil preparedness against broad spectre of threats including the hybrid ones, was also issued by the NATO heads of state and government. [10]

The restart of NATO-EU cooperation (embodied by the Joint declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) [11] has also translated in the area of civil preparedness and resilience (see chapter 3.2).

3.1 Resilience guidelines for seven baseline requirements

The objective of the Guidelines is to assist NATO member countries, and possibly also selected partners (Sweden, Finland), with the implementation, should they decide so, of the individual requirements within the seven baseline requirements for national resilience. These seven baseline requirements were identified in the Report:

1. Continuity of government and critical government services
2. Resilient energy supply
3. Ability to deal effectively with uncontrolled movement of people
4. Resilient food and water resources
5. Ability to deal with mass casualties
6. Resilient civil communication systems
7. Resilient civil transport systems

In the following period the NATO CEP will work on a) finalising the evaluation criteria in these seven areas, b) best practises and c) ensuring possible meeting of the Guidelines objectives by the member countries.

The work on the evaluation criteria and the Guidelines as a whole should be concluded by mid-2017 and will then be submitted to the NAC for approval. The overall aim is to finish all these particular steps in order to produce a new comprehensive report analysing the civil preparedness area by 2018. In parallel with this work stream a new ‘political guidance’ for CEP area for years 2018-2021 will also be prepared in 2017. Once noticed and approved by the NAC both of these documents will be sent to national authorities for potential implementation which in the case of the Czech Republic means submitting these documents to the national VCNP.

The endeavour to complete the Guidelines has already started. Respective planning groups have already finalised inputs in their individual areas of competencies and all of the Guidelines are currently being discussed at the permanent CEPC level in order to be ready for the upcoming CEPC plenary meeting.

This stream of work has also informed the Defence Planning Capability Survey (DPCS) since civil preparedness/resilience related questions based on the Guidelines are to be incorporated into the 2017 DPCS. This highlights the rising importance of concerted civil and military planning for NATO and its members alike.

3.2 NATO-EU cooperation

The framework for cooperation laid out by the joint declaration aimed to achieve complementarity in both organizations approach to ‘hybrid’ threats and resilience. In line with this the NATO ministers of foreign affairs have in December 2016 approved a common set of proposals on the implementation of the joint NATO-EU declaration which includes, among other things, a goal to create coordinated capability which would, upon request, assist EU/NATO member countries in bolstering their resilience (building upon the NATO resilience guidelines). [12] This capability could be modelled on the already time-tested NATO Advisory Support Team (AST) mechanism established almost a decade ago (2008) within the CEP framework.

3.3 Ad-hoc working groups within the NATO CEP framework

In addition to these activities the Czech Republic is taking part in two NATO ad-hoc working groups. The CEPC ad-hoc working group on CBRN Non-binding Guidelines (CBRN WG) and Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD WG).

The CBRN WG aims to implement NATO project on Minimum Standards and Non-Binding Guidelines for First Responders Regarding Planning, Training, Procedure and Equipment for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Incidents. This activity builds on the NATO Non-binding Guidelines for first responders to a CBRN incident. [13] In November 2015 the MoI-DG FRS CZ organised, in cooperation with this ad-hoc WG, a seminar for directors and experts from training centres for CBRN defense. These CBRN training centres organise courses for instructors responsible for training the first responders in the CBRN area in NATO member and partner countries. In this regard, we can mention a NATO joint CBRN defence Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Vyškov Czech Republic which is one of the training centres involved in the training. The CoE is also supported by the FRS CZ.

The BMD WG works on minimising/limiting the consequences of intercepted or non-intercepted ballistic missiles with CBRN load on civilian population and critical infrastructure in NATO member countries.

4 Conclusions

The role of NATO Civil Emergency Planning today, when we are confronted with ever more unpredictable, heterogeneous and demanding security environment, is paramount in meeting contemporary and future threats to NATO and member countries. Civil Emergency Planning will be increasingly relevant in timely and effective provision of national civil resources for the overall military needs. Together with civil preparedness and national resilience NATO CEP is becoming a necessary tool for adequate execution of NATO collective defence. It is therefore safe to say that the significance of the tasks executed by MoI-DG FRS CZ in this respect – the cooperation and coordination of national CEP framework in a cohesive manner in order to facilitate the promotion of Czech national civil security interests – is growing too.

For the near future the NATO CEP framework is geared towards completing two main goals – finalising the Resilience guidelines for the seven baseline requirements (mid-2017) as a stepping stone for a new comprehensive report analysing the civil preparedness area (by 2018); and preparation of a new CEP Political Guidance for 2018-2021 (by 2017). Realisation of these objectives will be an important milestone that would significantly contribute to reframing of the CEP policy in the new security context.

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